THE PRINCIPAL

ACTS

OF THE

General Assembly

OF THE

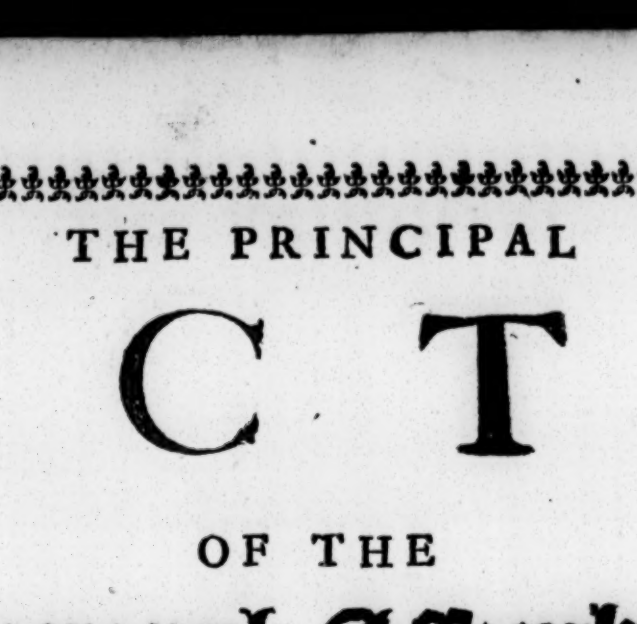
CHURCH

OF

SCOTLAND;

Conveened at *Edinburgh*, *January* 11th, 1698.

Collected and Extracted from the Records, by the Clerk thereof.



EDINBURGH,

Printed by *George Moſman*, Printer to this CHURCH and its Aſſemblies, *Anno Domini* M. DC. XCVIII.

THE PRINCIPAL

ACTS

OF THE

General Assembly

OF THE

CHURCH

OF

SCOTLAND;

Holden and begun at *Edinburgh*, the 11th Day of *January* 1698, and ending the 24th of the same Month.

I.

The Recording of His Majesty's Commission to the Lord Carmichael, *for representing His Majesty in this Assembly.*

At *Edinburgh*, 11th *January* 1698. Sess. 1.

THIS Day, the General Assembly of the Ministers and Elders of this National Church being conveened, there was produced to them by a Noble Lord, *John* Lord *Carmichael*, His Majesty's *Commission*, under the Great Seal of this Kingdom, nominating and appointing him to be His Majesty's High Commissioner and Representative in this National Assembly; which was publickly read in their Audience, with all due Honour and Respect: And the General Assembly appointed, and hereby appoints the same to be recorded in the Registers of this Assembly, therein to remain *ad futurum rei memoriam*, the Tenor whereof follows.

" *GULIELMUS*, Dei Gratia, *Magnæ Britanniæ*, " *Franciæ* & *Hiberniæ* Rex, Fideique Defenſor: Omnibus " probis Hominibus, ad quos præſentes Literæ Noſtræ per- " venerint, *Salutem.* Quandoquidem ex Decreto Noſtro, " Generalis Eccleſiæ Conventus Antiquioris Noſtri Regni " *Scotiæ*, in *undecimum* diem Menſis *Januarii* inſtantis con- " tinuatus erat, Noſque autem abunde cupidi, quin etiam " neceſſarium eſſe Judicantes, in commodum dictæ Eccleſiæ, " ut idem *Generalis Conventus*, Die ſtatuto, debite obſer- " vetur; ſed rebus magni momenti alio vocantibus, dicto " Conventui intereſſe nequimus: Cumque Fideliſſimus & " Dilectiſſimus Noſter Conſiliarius, *Joannis* Dominus *Carmi-* " *chael* perplurima edidit ſpecimina, de Facultatibus ſuis " Eximiis, & Fidelitate inſigni; unde Nobis abunde ſatis- " factum eſt, Quod ad munera ſummi Officii infra-mentio- " nati rite exercenda & obeunda, in finem ſupra-expreſſum " uſquequaque eſt idoneus: *Noveritis* igitur Nos feciſſe & " conſtituiſſe, ſicuti per has Noſtras patentes Literas faci- " mus & conſtituimus eundem *Joannem* Dominum *Carmi-* " *chael*, Supremum Noſtrum Commiſſionarium. Quoad " Effectum infra-expreſſum, Damus pariter & concedimus " illi, ſacram Noſtram Perſonam, & Authoritatem Noſtram " Regalem Repreſentandi, præſentiam Noſtram ſupplendi, " locumque Noſtrum in dicto ſubſequenti Generali Con- " ventu, tanquam Commiſſionario Noſtro, in hunc effectum " ſpecialiter conſtituto, Tenendi, Omniaque alia ad Impe- " rium & Munus Commiſſionarii, pro Generali Eccleſiæ " Conventu peragendi, tam plene, adeoque libere in quo- " vis Reſpectu quam Quilibet alius ejuſdem Supremi Mu- " neris & Characteris fecerat, ſeu quovis tempore retroacto " facere potuerat; atque ſicuti Nos ipſi perſonaliter præſen- " tes facere potuerimus, pleniſſimam & ampliſſimam No- " ſtram Poteſtatem & Commiſſionem. Quæquidem omnia " & ſingula, a dicto *Joanne* Domino *Carmichael*, in hac " Noſtra Commiſſione, proſequenda, legitime facienda, Nos " firmiter approbamus, Rati habemus & habituri ſumus. " Omnibus & ſingulis in ſupradicti Conventus & Eccleſiæ " Paſtoribus & Presbyteris, & cæteris quibuſcunque hujus " Regni Noſtri ſubditis, cujuſcunque qualitatis & conditio- " nis, ut dictum *Joannem* Dominum *Carmichael*, tanquam ſu- " premum Noſtrum Commiſſionarium, quoad Effectum & " Modum ſupra-mentionatum, Agnoſcant, Revereantur, & " dicto ipſius audientes ſe præbeant, ſtricte præcipimus & " imperamus. Ac denique, hanc Noſtram Commiſſionem, " a die quo magnum hujus Regni Noſtri Sigillum præſenti- " bus eſt appenſum, & deinceps hac Seſſione ſequenti Genera- " lis Conventus antedicti in vigore continuare declaravimus " & per præſentes declaramus, vel uſquedum a nobis revo- " cabitur. In cujus rei Teſtimonium, præſentibus Magnum

" Sigillum

" ſigillum noſtrum appendi præcepimus. Apud Aulam
" noſtram de *Kenſington*, quinto die menſis *Januarii*, Anno
" Domini, Milleſimo Sexcenteſimo Nonogeſimo Octavo,
" Regnique noſtri Anno nono,

Per ſignaturum manu S. D. N. *Regis Supraſignatum.*

{Locus Sigilli Appenſi}

IN DORSO.

Written to the great Seal, and Regiſtrate the tenth Day of January 1698. Dun. Ronald *Deput.* {*Sealed at* Edinburgh, *the tenth Day of* January 1698. A. Home.}

II.

His Majeſty's gracious Letter to the General Aſſembly.

Eadem Seſſione.

THE ſaid Day His Majeſty's High Commiſſioner produced his *Majeſty's* moſt gracious Letter, directed to this Aſſembly, which was publickly read in their Hearing, with all due Honour and Reſpect, and appointed to be Recorded in the Regiſters of this Aſſembly, the Tenor whereof follows;

WILLIAM R.

Right Reverend, and Well-Beloved,

WE Greet you Well. We are ſo well ſatisfied with your Proceedings, at the laſt *General Aſſembly*, that we agree to your Meeting now, though another Time had been more convenient for our Affairs. And we have again made choice of our Right Truſtee, and entirely Beloved Councellour *John* Lord *Carmichael*, to be our Commiſſioner, of whoſe Fidelity and Zeal for our Service, we have had Experience on former Occaſions; and who, we know, will be acceptable to you; And we doubt not, but you will act in ſuch a Manner in this *Aſſembly*, as that we ſhall have new Reaſon to be ſatisfied with you. And we do renew our Aſſurances of our Protection, and Countenance to the *Presbyterian Government*, now ſettled in the Church of *Scotland.*

You know it is our Inclinations, and we do Recommend to you, to aſſume the *Epiſcopal Miniſters* whoſe Lives and Doctrine do render them uſeful to the Church; And likeways the planting the Churches in the *North*, with the moſt Prudent and Pious of your Miniſters; And that you ſend ſome of your Number, who are beſt qualified, to Preach in the remote *Highland* Pariſhes, where Miniſters are not provided, and where there appears to be ſo much need of a Reformation, both from *Popery* and *Prophanity*. In all which we expect to hear of your Care and Performance, and ſo we bid you heartily Farewell.

Given at Our Court at Kenſingtoun, *the fifth Day of* January 1698, *and of Our Reign the Ninth Year.*

By his Majeſty's Command,

Tullibardine.

To the Right Reverend, and Well-Beloved, The Miniſters and Elders, Commiſſioners of the General Aſſembly of the Church of Our ancient Kingdom of Scotland.

III.

The General Aſſembly's Anſwer to his Majeſty's gracious Letter.

Edinburgh, 13th *January* 1698. Seſſ. 3.

May it pleaſe your Majeſty,

THE Satisfaction Your Majeſty vouchſafes to ſignifie by Your moſt gracious Letter to this Aſſembly, with the proceedings of the former; Your *Majeſty's* renewed Aſſurance of your Protection, and Countenance to the *Presbyterian Government*, now ſettled in this Church, and Your having agreed to our *Meeting* at this Time, when ſo many other weighty Affairs call forth and employ Your Royal Care, Do lay ſuch Obligations on us to our Duty, as we ſhall endeavour better to expreſs our Senſe thereof, in the Courſe of our Actings, than now we are able to do by Words.

Nor

Nor is it one of the leaſt Teſtimonies of Your *Majeſty's* fatherly Regard to this Church, That as You have formerly recommended,and encouraged the ſuppreſſing and reſtraining of all Vice and Profanity; So Your Majeſty doth now teſtify a ſpecial Concern, for planting a well qualified Miniſtry in thoſe Places that want it, and that You are pleaſed to excite us to a cheerful Management of all the Matters that ly before us,by the continued Choice of the Lord *Carmichael*, to repreſent You Royal PERSON now again in this Aſſembly,whoſe unblemiſhed Faithfulneſs,and ſteady Zeal to Your Majeſty's Service, joined with a conſtant good Affection to this Church, have always very ſignally, and to us moſt obliging appeared.

The General Aſſembly is ſtill ready as aſſume ſuch Miniſters as ſerved under the late *Prelacy*, whoſe Lives and Doctrines render them uſeful in the Church, and who apply to them in the Terms and Methods propoſed by former Aſſemblies, and ſhall recommend the ſame to inferiour Judicatories

In the planting of the *North*, ſuch Progreſs as could be attained, hath been made ſince the laſt Aſſembly; and to proceed in this good Work, and provide for the remote *Highland* Pariſhes, we reckon, an imporitant Part of our preſent Duty, and do reſolve to apply our ſelves thereto, with that Diligence, and ſo to demean our ſelves therein, and in our whole Conduct,through Divine Aſſiſtance,that we truſt this Aſſembly ſhall not prove unworthy of the Continuance of Your Majeſty's favourable Opinion of us.

That the great God, by whom Kings reign, may daily multiply his beſt Bleſſings, upon Your Royal Perſon and Government, is, and ſhall be, the moſt ſincerely affectionate and fervent Prayer of,

May it pleaſe Your Majeſty,
Your Majeſty's moſt faithful, moſt obedient, and moſt humble Subjects,

The Miniſters and Elders, met in this National Aſſembly of the Church of Scotland,

Signed in our Preſence, in our Name, and at our Appointment, by

GEO. MELDRUM *Moderator.*

IV.

To His Moſt Excellent Majeſty,

The humble ADDRESS of the National Aſſembly of the Church of *Scotland.*

Eadem Seſſione.

May it pleaſe your Majeſty,

AS the Commiſſioners of the former Aſſembly, under a juſt Senſe of Duty, did addreſs Your *Majeſty*, upon Your happy auſpicious Arrival to theſe Your Kingdoms; ſo we the preſent Repreſentatives of this National Church, do now for our ſelves, and in Name of that Church, which we repreſent, with moſt humble Adorations, and thankful Praiſes to our good God, acknowledge His ineſtimable Mercy to us, in ſending Your *Majeſty* to be our Deliverer and Reſtorer; (a Bleſſing never to be forgotten by us, nor our Poſterity) in Conducting and Preſerving Your *Majeſty*, through the long Tract of a moſt juſt and neceſſary, but moſt hazardous War, (undertaken to aſſert and vindicate the oppreſſed Liberties of Chriſtendom) whileſt You were expoſed to the moſt open and formidable Dangers; in keeping You ſafe, in the Hidings of his own Power; and in returning You to Your loving and longing People, adorned with the beſt of Triumphs, (the Effect of Your deep Wiſdom, as well as of Your matchleſs Valour) a ſolid and honourable Peace.

No Expreſſions can reach the Fulneſs of our loyal Hearts, upon this great Occaſion, nor that ſincere Joy that is raiſed in us, by the Hopes of Your *Majeſty*'s applying Your ſelf with Chriſtian princely Vigour, to maintain that Holy Religion (given us by the GOD who hath call'd, upheld and eſtabliſh'd You) to curb the Enormities of a debauch'd and profligate Age, and to quell the Monſters of Profanity and Atheiſm that have dared ſo boldly to bid Defiance to Heaven, and all that is Sacred: From theſe doth ariſe our greateſt Danger, leſt Wrath be upon us from the GOD of Heaven; in ſubduing theſe, a yet higher pitch of Courage, ſteady Reſolution, and true Greatneſs of Mind is required, than in overcoming the greateſt Armies, in the Field of Battle. This noble Atchiement, ſeems to be reſerved for Your *Majeſty*, as the peculiar Glory of Your now peaceful Reign, both by Your Authority and Royal Example, to render Piety and Virtue in the Eyes of the World, (as indeed they are in themſelves) the true Point of Honour; and all Impiety and Vice, (tho' in Perſons of moſt elevated Quality and Station) Matter of Infamy and Diſgrace,

Diſgrace, without which no effectual Reformation of degenerated Manners, can ever be expected.

May the Divine Majeſty, of whom is the Salvation of Kings, (who hath done Wonders for You, and wrought Wonders by You, whoſe great and happy Inſtrument You are) long preſerve, richly bleſs and proſper Your Majeſty, and render You no leſs Illuſtrious, in all the Arts of Peace, than You have been in theſe of War; and when He ſhall have ſerved His own great and gracious Ends by You in this World, may You be tranſlated to inherite the Glories of that Kingdom of Purity and Peace, that can never be ſhaken: So we pray, with the moſt fervent Affection of dutiful and ſincere Hearts, who are,

May it pleaſe Your Majeſty,
Your Majeſty's moſt faithful, moſt obedient, and moſt humble Subjects,
The Miniſters and Elders, met in this National Aſſembly of the Church of Scotland,
Signed in our Preſence, in our Name, and at our Appointment, by

GEO. MELDRUM, *Moderator.*

V.

Edinburgh, 15 January 1698. *ante merid.*

Seſſ. 6.

Act and Declaration, for Vindication of the Church of Scotland *from the Calumny of* Thomas Gipps, *Rector of* Bury, *in a Sermon preached by him.*

THE General Aſſembly of this National Church, being informed, that the Presbyterians (partiularly theſe of *Scotland*) are charged in a Sermon preached by *Thomas Gipps* Rector of *Bury* in *England*, now printed and publiſhed, as Corrupters of the Word of God, with Deſign to ſupport the Peoples Power in ſetting up Miniſters over themſelves; and that this Corruption is made by them, in *Acts* vi. 3. by cauſing it be printed, *Whom ye may appoint over this Buſineſs*, inſtead of *Whom we may appoint*: And therefore the General Aſſembly do unanimouſly declare, That as they allow no Power in the People, but only in the Paſtors of the Church, to appoint or ordain Church-Officers, ſo they diſclaim the above-mentioned Error of the Preſs, if any ſuch be found in any Bibles printed in this Nation; and do declare they do not own any other Reading of that Text, to be according to the Original, but *Whom we may*

appoint, &c. Nor do they know, nor can learn, that ever any in this Nation did publickly uſe or apply that Text, to prove the Peoples Power in ordaining their Miniſters.

VI.

Act for punctual ſending of Commiſſioners to the General Aſſemblies, and their Attendance during the ſitting thereof.

Edinburgh, 18. January 1698. *poſt merid.*

Seſſ. 8.

THE General Aſſembly taking to their Conſideration the Overture tranſmitted by the laſt Aſſembly to Presbyteries, anent punctual ſending of Commiſſioners to General Aſſemblies, and their Attendance during the ſitting thereof; and having heard the Report of the ſeveral Commiſſioners from Presbyteries, to whom the Conſideration of the ſame was recommended, in order to its being more ripely adviſed, and determined in this Aſſembly: The General Aſſembly do appoint Presbyteries to chuſe their Commiſſioners for the General Aſſembly, a competent Time before the ſitting thereof, at leaſt Forty Days; and that each General Aſſembly appoint a Committee of Cenſures to cognoſce upon the Dates of Commiſſions, and the Attendance of theſe commiſſioned; to the End, that ſuch Presbyteries as do not make their Election in due Time, as likewiſe ſuch Commiſſioners as do not attend duly from the Beginning and through the whole Diets of the General Aſſembly, and the Committees which they may be put upon, not having a relevant Excuſe, may be cenſured as the General Aſſembly ſhall think fit. And *Laſtly*, The General Aſſembly recommends to Presbyteries, to chuſe ſuch Ruling Elders to be their Commiſſioners, as may attend; and ſeriouſly to exhort them when choſen, to make Conſcience of attending upon General Aſſemblies: And recommends the punctual Obſervance of Act 4. General Aſſembly 1694. anent the giving in Commiſſions, and making up the Rolls the Night before the Aſſembly meet, or the next Morning; for which Purpoſe, the Clerk is to attend in the Aſſembly Houſe, at that Time.

VII.

VII.

Act anent the Deficients in supplying the North.

Edinburgh, 21. January 1698. *post meridiem.*

Sess. 12.

THE General Assembly having enquired, how the 6th Act of the last Assembly, anent these Ministers who had not obeyed the Appointment of the Assembly 1696, concerning the Mission to the North was observed; and Mr. *Joseph Drew* Minister at *New-Monkland*, being heard, his Excuse for not going (hitherto) was sustained: But he is appointed to fulfil the Time of his Mission, conform to the said Act; and if there be any inevitable Impediments in his Way, appoints the Presbytery of *Hamilton* to send one in his Room, and that the Commission see this done. And further, Refers to the Commission, to see the Presbytery of *Paisley* fulfil the Time of the Mission of their two Ministers, conform to the said Act of the last Assembly. And *Lastly*, Refers to the said Commission, to enquire how the Supplies appointed by the last Assembly were sent up; and likewise to see that any Supplies that shall be appointed by this Assembly, be punctually sent from the several Synods, and to censure the Deficients.

VIII.

Act approving Overtures for planting the North.

Eadem Sessione.

SEing the Mission of the Forty four Ministers hath so far come short of the designed Transportation of actual Ministers from the South to the North, and the Necessity of that Country continues, The Assembly declares, that twelve Ministers shall be transported from the South, to some of the following Posts, (which are either considerable in themselves, or, by reason of their Circumstances, necessarily to be supplied) now vacant; Three of the said Ministers to the Province of *Angus* and *Merns*; to any of the Posts following, *viz. Montrose*, *Breichen*, *Migle*, *Eliot*, *Longforgan*, *Farnall* or *Fettereſſo*; Six of them to the Province of *Aberdeen*; to any of these Posts following, *viz. New* and *Old Aberdeen*, *Peterhead*, *Foveran*, *Raffin*, *Morthlick*, *Boyndy*, *Upperbanchory*, *Oven* or *Old Meldrum*; and Three to the Province of *Murray*, to any of these Posts following, *viz. Inverness*, *Elgin*, *Duffus* or *Keith*.

That

That in order to the above End, the Presbyteries in the foreſaid Provinces endeavour to get ordinary Calls; and in Caſe theſe Pariſhes above-mentioned ſhall neglect to give the ſame, the Aſſembly declares, that Calls by the Presbytery of the Bounds, to which any of theſe Places belongs, ſhall be ſuſtained ſufficient; the ſaid Presbytery atteſting, that there are probable Grounds that the People will ſubmit to the Miniſtry of the Miniſter ſo called, when ſettled among them: And the Perſon thus called, is to be looſed and tranſported according to the Method propoſed by the laſt Aſſembly in the Overtures contained Act 16. Only where it is granted by the laſt Aſſembly, That ſuch Calls ſhould be purſued by the Kirk-Agent or his Deputes. This Aſſembly allows alſo a Commiſſion from the Pariſh or Preſbytery calling, to be ſufficient to any other Perſon whatſoever, to purſue the ſaid Tranſportation. And the General Aſſembly does ſeriouſly recommend it to the Miniſters of the North, to uſe all Tenderneſs and Caution, as to the Seats of Univerſities, the actual Reſidences of Noblemen, and principal Royal Burghs: And that before they proceed to moderate a Call to any of theſe twelve Miniſters thus to be tranſported, they conſult with ſome of the moſt prudent and experienced Men, in the ſame Synod to which the Miniſter called belongs. And, on the other Hand, the Aſſembly ſeriouſly recommends to theſe Presbyteries, Synods and Commiſſion, who ſhall have Occaſion to Judge in any of theſe Tranſportations, that they conſider the clamant Condition of the North: And that in Effect the Competition betwixt the Pariſhes called from and called to, be not reckoned; but between the Pariſh called from and the neceſſitous Condition of the North; and that they conſider the many Diſappointments the North hath met with already.

4. The Aſſembly further declares, That theſe twelve Miniſters, thus to be tranſported, are to be taken out of the Synods after-mentioned, *viz.* Five of them out of the Synod of *Glaſgow* and *Air*, Four of them out of the Synod of *Lothian* and *Tweddale*, Two of them out of the Synod of *Merſe* and *Teviotdale*, and One of them out of the two Eaſtern Presbyteries of the Synod of *Fife*, viz. the Presbyteries of *Coupar* and St. *Andrews*.

5. That the Aſſembly nominate Twenty Probationers to go immediately to the North, and theſe Probationers born in the North, to be named in the firſt place: And to help to defray the Charges of their Journey thither, that they be allowed each of them One hundred Merks out of the King's Gift, for defraying the publick Expences of the Church, beſide the Allowance given by Act of Parliament to Preachers in vacant Congregations; and to theſe who go to *Orkney* Two hundred Merks:

Merks: And that five of these be sent to supply the Vacancies of the Synod of *Aberdeen*; four of them to supply the Vacancies of the Synod of *Angus* and *Mearns*; four of them to supply the Vacancies of *Murray*; two of them to supply *Ross*, *Sutherland*, and *Caithness*, and two to *Orkney*; and three of them to supply *Perth*, *Auchterarder*, and *Dunkela* Vacancies; and all of them to continue in the *North* for a Twelvemonth. And it is hereby referred to the Commission, to be appointed by this Assembly, to consider and determine what Probationers are to go to these respective Provinces above-mentioned, together with the Time of their Stay and Abode in each Province. Which twenty Probationers, are hereby obliged to accept of Calls, whether Popular or Presbyterial, when presented to them by the Presbyteries of any of the saids Provinces, with Certification if they refuse the same, the Presbytries within whose Bounds they are called, shall have Power to take their Licence from them until the next Assembly.

6. This Assembly doth hereby continue the former Supplies of the *North*, by the Synods of the *South*, granted by the fourteenth Act of the last Assembly, defaulking only three Ministers of the eighteen formerly allowed, five of which are to supply *Aberdeen* Province, four to supply *Murray*, three to supply *Angus* and *Mearns*, one to supply *Ross*, *Sutherland*, and *Caithness*, and two to supply *Perth*, *Auchterarder*, and *Dunkeld*. Unto which Supply the Synods expresst in the foresaid Act, are liable in the Way and Manner therein-expresst. And because there are three of the Number taken down, the Synods of *Dumfreis* and *Galloway*, with the Presbyteries of *Stirling* and *Dumblain*, are exempted from the said Supply.

7. It is overtur'd, that a numerous *Commission* be appointed by this Assembly, with Power to them, to divide themselves, into as many *Committees* as they shall see fit, and to send them to any Parts of this Church, *South* or *North*; which Commission is to meet Quarterly, and when or where they shall see Cause: And that all the Members thereof, shall give punctual Attendance, at the said Quarterly Meetings, and an exact Account to be taken of the Absents therefrom.

8. That it be recommended to some to name and draw up a List of the Members of the said Commission, and to draw up Instructions to be given unto them.

That the saids Committees to be appointed by the Genral Commission have Power to visit the Bounds they are sent unto, and to receive Complaints from Presbyteries, and redress Grievancies of particular Ministers or Presbyteries, and to inflict Censures, and to do every other Thing, competent to Visitations; the Presbytery of the Bounds, where the said Committee shall come, being always to be reckoned Members thereof, while within their Bounds.

The General Assembly approves of the Overtures above-written.

IX.

Act anent the printed Overtures, concerning the Discipline and Method of proceeding in Ecclesiastick Judicatories, offered to the last Assembly, by a private Hand.

Eadem Sessione.

THE General Assembly having heard and considered the Opinion of the Commission of the last Assembly dated the 5th Day of *January* Instant, anent the Overtures concerning Church-Discipline, and the Method of proceeding in Ecclesiastick Judicatories; As also, having heard the Report of a Committee of this Assembly's own Number, appointed to consider the same. The General Assembly thinks fit to appoint, and hereby appoints, Mr. *Gilbert Rule* Principal of the College of *Edinburgh*, Mr. *William Dunlop* Principal of the College of *Glasgow*, Mr. *Robert Wylie* Minister at *Hamiltoun*, Mr *George Meldrum*, and Mr. *William Crichton* at *Edinburgh*, Mr. *John Veitch*, Mr. *Andrew Cameron*, and Mr. *George Barclay* Ministers; Sir *James Stewart* His Majesty's Advocate, *Adam Cockburn* of *Ormistoun* Lord Justice Clerk, and Sir *Colin Campbell* of *Aberuchle*, One of the Senators of the College of Justice, Ruling Elders, to be a Committee for considering the saids Overtures, and the Animadversions made thereupon, and Compare them with the *Words of God*, *Books of Discipline*, *and Acts of the General Assemblies of this Church*, and to consider what is wanting, or to be added thereto, or altered therein, and to set out a new Edition of the said Overtures, that the several Presbyteries may have Opportunity to animadvert therein, and appoints them to send their Judgment thereanent to the Commission of this Assembly, who are to prepare the same against the next General Assembly.

X.

Approbation of the Actings and Proceedings of the Commission, appointed by the late General Assembly.

Eadem Sessione.

THE General Assembly having this Day had reproduced in their Presence, the Register of the Actings and Proceedings of the Commissioners appointed by the last Assembly, and having heard a Report of a Committee of their own Number, appointed to revise, consider and examine the same, with their Observes thereupon, all the Members of the said Commission were removed, and the General Assembly having seriously considered the said Report, and Answers made by the Members

of the Commission to the saids Observes, and finding thereby that the whole Actings, Proceedings and Conclusions of the saids Commissioners, contained in the Register thereof, subscribed by Mr. *John Moncrief* Clerk thereof, consisting of One hundred and sixty eight Pages, do evidence much Wisdom, Prudence and Diligence; and that the said Commission have proceeded orderly and formally in every Thing, according to their Commission and Instructions, and that the said Register is very accurate: Therefore this General Assembly, by an unanimous Vote, did, and hereby do, ratify and approve the saids whole Actings, Proceedings and Conclusions of the saids Commissioners, contained in the said Register thereof, beginning the 13 Day of *January* 1697, and ending the 5th Day of *January* Instant, inclusive of both Days.

XI.

Recommendation anent Subscribing of Synod-Records.

Edinburgh, 22. January 1698. Sess. 13.

THE General Assembly recommends to all Synods, for hereafter, to take care, that their Registers be compleatly filled up, always before the sitting of the General Assembly; and that the Proceedings of every Synod be signed both by the Moderator and Clerk thereof: And *lastly*, Appoints the Synod-Books thus filled up, and subscribed to be timeously produced to the General Assemblies Yearly, in order to their being revised.

XII.

Commission to some Ministers and Elders for planting vacant Churches in the North, *and some other particular Affairs committed to them by the General Assembly.*

Edinburgh, 24. January 1698. *ante merid.*

Sess. 14.

THE General Assembly of this National Church, considering, that there are yet many vacant Churches on the *North* Side of *Tay*; as likewise, that there are several weighty Affairs, which this Assembly cannot now overtake, therefore the General Assembly finds it needful, that there be a Commission granted to some Ministers and Elders for planting these vacant Kirks, and doing what other Affairs shall be referred to them; and for that End, do hereby nominate and appoint Mr. *Andrew Cameron* Minister of the Gospel at *Kirkcudbright*, Mr. *Andrew Ewart* at *Kells*, Mr. *Robert Rowand* at *Penninghame*, Mr. *Robert Campbell* at *Stonykirk*, Mr. *John Hunter* at *Air*, Mr. *James*

Gilchriſt at *Kirkmichael*, Mr. *John Wilſon* at *Largs*, Mr. *Thomas Kennedy* at *Ballantrae*, Mr. *Andrew Fauls* at *Fenwick*, Mr. *Robert Wylie* at *Hamiltoun*, Mr. *George Cleland* at *Shots*, Mr. *Thomas Linning* at *Leſmehego*, Mr. *John Scot* at *Carluke*, Mr. *John Banantyne* at *Lanark*, Mr. *James Brown* at *Glaſgow*, Mr. *William Dunlop* Principal of the College of *Glaſgow*, Mr. *Andrew Tait* at *Carmunock*, Mr. *Patrick Simſon* at *Renfrew*, Mr. *Thomas Blackwell* at *Paiſley*, Mr. *Robert Wallace* at *Berrernock*, Mr. *George Park* at *Kilerne*, Mr. *Walter Campbell* at *Denoon*, Mr. *Daniel Campbell* at *Kilmichael*, Mr. *Samuel Nairn* at *Errol*, Mr. *Thomas Black* at *Perth*, Mr. *William Moncrieff* at *Methven*, Mr. *John Tillidaff* at *Dumbarnie*, Mr. *William Spence* at *Foſſoway*, Mr. *William Reid* at *Dunning*, Mr. *William Chambers* at *Moonzie*, Mr. *Michael Potter* at *Dumblain*, Mr. *Alexander Douglaſs* at *Logie*, Mr. *George Turnbul* at *Alloway*, Mr. *John Foreſter* at *Stirling*, Mr. *William Dick* at *Forgan*, Mr. *Alexander Shiels* at St. *Andrews*, Mr. *William Moncrieff* at *Largo*, Mr. *John Anderſon* Principal of the *Leonardine* College, Mr *James Haddo* at *Coupar*, Mr. *Archibald Riddel* at *Kirkcaldy*, Mr. *William Mackie* at *Markinſh*, Mr. *Samuel Charters* at *Innerkeithing*, Mr. *Allan Logan* at *Torryburn*, Mr. *John Spalding* at *Dundee*, Mr. *William Mitchel* there, Mr. *William Arrot* at *Montroſs*, Mr. *James Osburn* at *Aberdeen*, Mr. *Thomas Ramſay* there, Mr. *George Anderſon* at *Tarves*, Mr. *Patrick Innes* at *Bamff*, Mr. *Thomas Thomſon* at *Turreff*, Mr. *Alexander Forbes* at *Dyke*, Mr. *James Thomſon* at *Elgin*, Mr. *Hugh Anderſon* at *Cromarty*, Mr. *William Innes* at *Thurſo*, Mr. *John Forreſt* at *Preſtonkirk*, Mr. *David Clunie* at *Cockburnſpath*, Mr. *John Sandilands* at *Dalphington*, Mr. *Robert Horsburgh* at *Glenwhom*, Mr. *James Anderſon* at *Lintown*, Mr. *Andrew Mitchel* at *Mannour*, Mr. *Patrick Cumming* at *Ormiſtoun*, Mr. *David Walker* at *Temple*, Mr. *Matthew Selkirk* at *Crichton*, Mr. *John Shaw* at *Newton*, Mr. *John Brand* at *Borrowſtonneſs*, Mr. *John Kinaird* at *Eaſt-calder*, Mr. *George Barclay* at *Uphall*, Mr. *William Burnet* at *Falkirk*, Mr. *Robert Rule* Principal of the College of *Edinburgh*, *Mr. George Meldrum* at *Edinburgh*, Mr. *William Crichton* there, Mr. *James Kirkton* there, Mr. *John Law* there, Mr. *George Hamilton* there, Mr. *John Moncrief* there, *Mr. David Blair* there, *Mr. James Webſter* there, *Mr. David Williamſon* at the *Weſt-kirk*, *Mr. Thomas Wilkie* at *Canongate*, *Mr. George Andrews* at *Preſtonpans*, *Mr. Mungo Watſon* at *Gladſmoor*, *Mr. Alexander Colden* at *Dunce*, *Mr. James Ramſay* at *Eymouth*, *Mr. John Simſon* at *Morbattle*, *Mr. John Veitch* at *Weſtruther*, *Mr. John Hardie* at *Gordon*, *Mr. Gabriel Semple* at *Jedburgh*, *Mr. George Guthrie* at *Oxnam*, *Mr. James Noble* at *Ecfoord*, *Mr. Hugh Craig* at *Gallaſheils*, *Mr. Charles Gordon* at *Aſhkirk*, *Mr. William Veitch* at *Dumfries*, *Mr. John Paiſly* at *Morton*, *Mr. Thomas*

Schiels

Shiels at *Sanquhar*, *George Mulligen* at *Moffat*, *James Armstrong* at *Cannabee*, Miniſters. *George* Earl of *Melvil* Preſident of the Council, *William* Earl of *Crawfurd*, *George* Earl of *Sutherland*, *William* Lord *Loſs*, *Robert* Lord *Burleigh*, *John* Lord *Belhaven*, *John* Lord *Carmichael*, Sir *James Stewart* His Majeſty's Advocate, *Adam Cockburn* of *Ormiſtoun* Lord Juſtice-Clerk, Sir *Alexander Swinton* of *Merſington*, Sir *Colin Campbel* of *Aberuchill*, Sir *David Hume* of *Croſſrig*, Sir *John Hamilton* of *Halcraig*, Four of the Senators of the College of Juſtice, Mr. *Francis Montgomery* of *Giffen*, Mr. *Hugh Dalrymple* of *Northberwick*, Lieutenant Colonel *John Erskine* of *Caridden*, Governour of the Caſtle of *Stirling*, Sir *George Campbel* of *Ceſnock*, The Laird of *Grant*, the Laird of *Lamington*, the Laird of *Brodie*, Sir *Adam Gordon* of *Dalpholly*, Sir *Colin Campbel* of *Ardkindlays*, The Laird of *Colloden*, Sir *John Clerk* of *Pennycook*, Sir *Thomas Burnet* His Majeſty's Phyſician, Sir *William Denholm* of *Weſt-ſhiels*, Sir *Archibald Mure* of *Thornton* Lord Provoſt of *Edinburgh*, The Laird of *Meggins*, the Laird of *Torwoodlie*, the Laird of *Fullerton*, the Laird of *Humbie*, the Laird of *Eight*, Mr. *Matthew Moncrief* of *Colforgie*, Mr. *James Craigie* of *Dumbarnie*, Captain *James Coult*, *Hugh Blair* late Dean of Guild of *Edinburgh*, *John Anderſon* of *Dowhill* and *John Alardes* Baillie in *Aberdeen* Ruling-Elders: To be Commiſſioners of the General Aſſembly, to the Effect aftermentioned; with full Power and Commiſſion to the ſaids Perſons, or their *Quorum*, which is hereby declared to be any Fifeteen of the ſaids Commiſſioners, whereof Nine are always to be Miniſters, to meet and conveen within the Aſſembly-Houſe at *Edinburgh*, the firſt Day after the Diſſolution of this Aſſembly, at ten of the Clock in the Forenoon, and afterward to meet the firſt *Wedneſdays* of *March*, *June*, *September*, and *December*, and oftner; where, or when they ſhall ſee needful, during the Continuance of this Commiſſion; And the General Aſſembly requires all the Members of this Commiſſion, to attend punctually the Meetings thereof, with Power to the ſaid Commiſſion, to chuſe their own Moderator, and Clerk And ſiklike, the General Aſſembly fully impowers and authoriſes the ſaids Commiſſioners, or there *Quorum*, to conſider, cognoſce, and finally determine, as they ſhall ſee Cauſe, in every Thing contained in, and conform to the Inſtructions given unto them by this Aſſembly, as fully and freely, as if the ſamen were in theſe Preſents at full Length inſert and ſet down. As alſo, to conſider, cognoſce and finally determine, in all References, Appeals and other Matters particularly remitted to them, by any Act or Order of this Aſſembly; all which are holden, as herein expreſt; And the General Aſſembly do hereby prohibite and diſcharge the

ſaids Commiſſioners to meddle in any other Matter, than what is contained herein; declaring alſo, that in and for their Actings, they ſhall be countable to, and cenſurable by the next enſuing General Aſſembly of this Church. And *Laſtly*, Declares, that this Commiſſion ſhall endure until the Meeting of the next General Aſſembly.

XIII.

Inſtructions to the Commiſſion appointed by this Aſſembly, for planting of the vacant Churches in the North, *&c.* Ead. Seſſ.

1. THAT this Commiſſion do what in them lies, to render effectual the Overtures paſt in this Aſſembly, for more ſpeedy planting of the *North*, and exerce all the Power that is committed to them for that End

2. That this Commiſſion, as often as they ſhall ſee Cauſe, apply to the Government, or any Magiſtrate, for there countenancing of, and Concurrence with the Judicatories of the Church, in what the Law allows; particularly, for ſetling vacant Congregations, and redreſſing any Grievances which may fall out.

3. That when any of the Miniſters, who ſerved under the late Prelacy, whoſe Lives and Doctrines may render them uſeful to this Church, do apply for Reception unto the Government, the General Aſſembly, in Proſecution of the Aſſurances given to his Majeſty, in their Letter written to him, do impower and recommend to this Commiſſion, and the other Judicatories of this Church, that they be ready to receive them, according to the 13th Paragraph of the 16th Act of the laſt General Aſſembly.

4. That this Commiſſion, in Diſpoſal of his Majeſty's Gifts to this Church, do particularly take Care, that the Encouragement granted by this Aſſembly to the Probationers, who are to go to the *North* to preach, be rendered effectual, and that they cauſe defray the extraordinary Charges, that ſeveral Miniſters of the *North* have been at, in carrying on the planting of the *North*, and other publick Affairs of the Church there; And for the defraying the Charges of ſuch Miniſters or Probationers, as ſhall yet be ſent to *Orkney*, or other remote Places of the *North*.

5. That if the Commiſſion ſhall ſee Cauſe to appoint Committees, upon Occaſion, for Viſitation of particular Kirks and Presbyteries, or Trial of Perſons, then the ſaid Committees, as to Trials, may proceed *uſque ad Sententiam*, but no further: But that in that Caſe, they report their Procedure to the Commiſſion, who are to paſs Sentence, as they ſhall ſee Cauſe.

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6. This Commiſſion may likewiſe, on the Deſire of any Presbytery, or Synod, ſend Committees, for aſſiſting them in Viſitation of Kirks within their Bounds. which Committees may be aſſiſting to the ſaids Presbytries or Synods either in Proceſſes and Cenſures, if need be; or in redreſſing the Grievances of particular Miniſters or Pariſhes within their Bounds.

7. The Commiſſion are to cognoſce, and finally determine in all References made to them by this Aſſembly and in all Appeals for tranſporting Miniſters to the *North*, which ſhall be orderly brought unto them, according to the Overtures thereanent, paſt in this Aſſembly.

8. This Commiſſion is alſo to correſpond with the State anent Faſts and Thankſgivings, as Occaſion requires, and to ſpecify the Cauſes thereof.

9. The Commiſſion is to give Advice and Aſſiſtance to any Synod or Presbytery in difficult Caſes, as they ſhall be applied unto, by them for that Effect.

XVI.

Act appointing ſome Miniſters to go for the Supply of the North, *until the next Aſſembly.* Eadem Seſſione.

THE General Aſſembly of this National Church taking unto their Conſideration, that there are yet many Vacancies in the *North*, and that the Miniſters which are ſettled there, are not in a Condition to ſupply the ſame, in a ſuitable Manner; Therefore they have ordained, and hereby ordains, that the Synods by *South Tay* after named, ſhall ſend to the Bounds of the Synods of *Angus* and *Merns*, *Aberdeen*, *Murray*, *Roſs*, *Sutherland*, and *Caithneſs*, and the Preſbyteries of *Perth*, *Auchterarder* and *Dunkeld*, within the Synod of *Perth*, the Number of fifeteen Miniſters, every four Months, according to the Proportions after-mentioned, *viz.* That Two be ſent to ſupply the Vacancies of *Perth*, *Auchterarder* and *Dunkeld*; Three to ſupply the Vacancies of the Synod of *Angus* and *Merns*: Five to ſupply the Vacancies of the Synod of *Aberdeen*; Four to ſupply the Vacancies of the Synod of *Murray*; and One to ſupply the Vacancies of the Synods of *Roſs*, *Sutherland* and *Caithneſs*; And the Aſſembly declares, that theſe above Supplies of fifeteen Miniſters be ſent every four Months, by the Synods aftermentioned, according to the following Proportions, *viz.* That from the Synod of *Merſe* and *Teviotdale*, there be ſent Three, each four Months, and that to the Synod of *Angus* and *Merns*: The Synod of *Lothian* ſhall ſend Four, two of

them to *Aberdeen*, and Two of them to *Murray*, as they ſaid *Synod* of *Lothian* ſhall determine; That the Synod of *Glaſgow* and *Air* ſhall ſend Five, *viz.* One to *Perth*, *Auchterarder* and *Dunkeld*, Three to *Aberdeen*, and one to *Murray*; That the Synod of *Fife* ſhall ſend Three, One to *Perth*, One to *Murray*, and One to *Caithneſs*, *Roſs* and *Sutherland*, as the ſaid Synod of *Fife* ſhall determine. And further, becauſe it is neceſſary that the ſaids Supplies, who ſhall go for the firſt four Months, ſhall be there, ſooner then the next ordinary Meeting of Synods; Therefore the Aſſembly appoints the Presbyteries after-named, to ſend a Miniſter to the Bounds of the Synods after-mentioned, to ſupply the Vacancies there; And that ſuch as ſhall be by them appointed be there, againſt the firſt *Sabbath* of *March* next, *viz.* the Presbyteries of *Chirnſide*, *Jedburgh* and *Selkirk*, within the Synod of *Merſe* and *Teviotdale*, to ſend each of them, one to ſupply the Vacancies in the Bounds of the Synod of *Angus* and *Merns*; that theſe five nominate already by the Synod of *Glaſgow* to go in *March*, do go to their reſpective Poſts, and that theſe appointed by the Synod of *Lothian* and *Tweddale* to go in *March*, do go to their reſpective Poſts appointed them. And *Laſtly*, From the Synod of *Fife*, the Presbytery of *Couper* to ſend one to *Roſs*, *Sutherland* and *Caithneſs*; the Presbytery of *Dumfermling* and *Kirkaldy* to ſend one to *Murray*; the Presbytery of St. *Andrews*, to *Perth*, *Auchterarder*, and *Dunkeld*: But in caſe that any of the ſaids Synods have already appointed their Supplies according to the Acts of the laſt Aſſembly, and if in Obedience thereunto, any Presbytery have already nominate the Perſons who are to go, then, and in that Caſe, the Aſſembly do hereby homologate and ratify the ſaids Appointments and Nominations, and hereby ordains all ſuch, as either are already appointed, or ſhall be hereafter appointed by Synods or Presbyteries for this, or the ſucceeding four Months Supply, that they repair to the reſpective Bounds, as above ſet down, againſt their reſpective Times allotted unto them, and be directed by the Presbytery and Miniſters of the reſpective Synods they repair to, as to what particular Congregations they ſhall apply themſelves unto, and that for the Space of four Months above-mentioned, *viz.* from *March* to *July* next; And the Aſſembly doth further ordain, the above-written Synods in the *South*, to ſend to the Places, and in the Manner above-mentioned, a new Supply of as many Miniſters more, to continue from the firſt of *July* next, till the firſt of *November* following, and ſo forth, ay and while the the ſitting of the next General Aſſembly; and the reſpective Presbyteries are to take care, that their Kirks be ſupplied, according to the fourteenth Act of the laſt General Aſſembly: And *Laſtly*, The Aſſembly ordains

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theſe Miniſters, ſent in Supply to the *North*, to catechiſe and do all appointed by the former Acts of Aſſembly, under the Certifications contained in the ſaids Acts; and that they get and produce to their own Presbytery, a Teſtimonial from the Presbytery, within the Bounds where they did ſupply, of their having fulfilled their Appointment, and of their Carriage and Behaviour, during their Abode in theſe Bounds; And the Aſſembly alſo declares, that theſe named by the Synods or Presbyteries in this Supply, who may be upon the Commiſſion, this ſhall be no Excuſe for them, to elude the ſaid Appointments.

XV.

Overtures againſt Profaneneſs.

Edinburgh, *the* 24*th* January 1698, *Poſt meridiem.* Seſſ. 15. *& ultima.*

THE General Aſſembly conſidering the lamentable Growth of Profanity, Ignorance and Irreligion, that is too manifeſt in this Land, and the woful Decay of the Life and Power of Godlineſs, with the ſmall Succeſs of the Goſpel, that's to be obſerved every where, at this Time: The General Aſſembly, in a deep Senſe of theſe Things, and for the remedying of them, do in the firſt Place, in the Awe and Dread of God, beſeech, exhort and require all Miniſters, by the Coming of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, and our gathering together unto him, that they take Heed to themſelves, and to their Doctrine, and endeavour to be Enſamples to the People, in all Piety, Purity, and Holineſs, in all Manner of Converſation.

2. That they be frequent and fervent in ſecret Prayer, for themſelves and the People committed to them, joining ſometime Faſting with Prayer; And the General Aſſembly recommends to Miniſters and Elders in their ſeveral Pariſhes, and Miniſters in their ſeveral Presbyteries, to meet ſometimes together, in their Pariſhes and Presbyteries reſpective, for private Faſting and Prayer, and Conference anent the State of the Church, and that Part of it, in which they have ſpecial Intereſt; with Reſpect to the Growth or Decay of Godlineſs, and Succeſs of the Goſpel therein.

3. That Presbyteries be more accurate in managing their privy Cenſures, and that a Day be ſet apart to that Purpoſe only, and ſpent in Faſting and Prayer together.

4. That the Presbyteries be very cautious in admitting Intrants to the Miniſtry, and be accurate and exact in the

Trial, not only of their Literature, but of their Piety, Prudence, and former godly Converſation and Walk.

5. That Miniſters be painful in catechiſing, frequent in viſiting of Families, and in private perſonal Conference with theſe of their Charge, about the State of their Souls; and that Miniſters be more frequent in Adminiſtration of the LORD'S Supper, and always edifying in their Converſe and Diſcourſe; and that they deal with Heads of Families, to engage them to Piety, and a Care to reform their Families, and to ſet up, and to keep up the Worſhip of GOD therein: And in particular, that Miniſters endeavour, by all prudent and gaining Goſpel-Methods, to engage Perſons of Honour and Power, to fall in Love with Holineſs, and reckon it, as indeed it is, their greateſt Honour: And that in dealing with ſuch of them, as are vicious, an humble, and yet holy Boldneſs and Zeal be uſed in admoniſhing them, in Order to their Recovery: And that herein Presbyteries appoint ſome others of their Number, to concur with the Miniſter of the Place, as may be moſt for Edification.

6. The General Aſſembly recommends to Kirk-Seſſions and Presbyteries, the vigorous, impartial, and yet prudent Exerciſe of Church-Diſcipline, againſt all Immorality, eſpecially Drunkenneſs and Filthineſs, Curſing and Swearing, and Profaning the LORD's Day, which too much abound: And that they apply to the Magiſtrate, for the Execution of the good Laws, made againſt Immorality and Profaneneſs.

7. For the more uſeful edifying, and effectual Exerciſe of Church-Diſcipline, the General Aſſembly recommends to the Commiſſion appointed by them, to conſider the printed Overtures of Church-Diſcipline, anent cenſuring of Scandals, with the Obſervations of Presbyteries thereupon, and the Overtures given in at this Aſſembly anent publick Rebukes, and the Sentence of leſſer Excommunication, the Way of dealing both with the Obſtinate and Penitent, and anent the ſcandalous Neglect of Parents in virtuous Education of their Children, and the Debauchery of Youth at Schools: And to digeſt and prepare Overtures thereanent, to be printed and tranſmitted to Presbyteries, together with the Acts of this General Aſſembly. And 'tis recommended to the ſeveral Presbyteries, to ſend in their Judgment and Opinion thereanent to the Commiſſion, that theſe Overtures may be ripened and prepared for the next General Aſſembly, if they think fit to paſs them into Act.

8. That ſeeing it is obſerved, that in Burghs, eſpecially theſe of greateſt Reſort, as *Edinburgh*, many ſit too late in Taverns, eſpecially on the *Saturday's* Night, and Men of Buſineſs pretend they do it, for Relaxation of their Minds; through which ſome neglect the publick Worſhip on the

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LORD'S Day, in the Forenoon; Others attend the Worſhip drowſily: Therefore, the General Aſſembly recommends to all Miniſters, where ſuch ſinful Cuſtoms are, to repreſent to the People, both publickly and privately the Sin and Evil thereof, and to call them to redeem that Time which they have free from Buſineſs, and to employ it for Converſe with GOD, about their Souls State, and in Preparation for the Sabbath, which will yield more Delight, than all ſenſual Pleaſures can do.

And the General Aſſembly beſeecheth and exhorteth all Magiſtrates of Burghs, to be aſſiſtant to Miniſters in enquiring into, and reforming ſuch Abuſes.

The General Aſſembly approves of theſe Overtures, and ſeriouſly recommends them to the ſeveral Presbyteries.

XVI.

Overtures againſt Popery. Eadem Seſſione.

1. THat Miniſters ſtudy theſe Cotnroverſies more.

2. That all due Endeavours be uſed to unite Proteſtants among themſelves, ſeeing the Adverſaries get Advantage by our Diviſion.

3. That Miniſters endeavour faithfully to watch the Flock committed to them, and by publick Preaching, and private Inſtructions and Conference, to prevent Apoſtaſy, that way.

4. That Miniſters deal wiſely and convincingly with the Conſciences of theſe that have fallen to Popery, and other corrupt Principles for their Recovery.

5. That, when other Means are ineffectual, Presbyteries would proceed to Church-Cenſures, when they ſee it may be for the Edification of the Church.

9. That, according to the Acts of former General Aſſemblies, and Acts of Parliament, the Names of Popiſh Prieſts, Jeſuits, and traffiqueing Papiſts, and of thoſe who have ſent their Children to Popiſh Colleges and Countries, be given to each Provincial Synod, and by them tranſmitted, as Act, *Car.* II. *Par.* 3. *Cap.* 6.

7. That the General Aſſembly apply to the Privy Council for the vigorous Execution of the Laws againſt Papiſts, particularly, Seminary-Prieſts, Popiſh School-maſters, Miſtreſſes, Governours, and Pedagogues, and Popiſh Meetings; and for ſeeing to the training up of Popiſh Youth in the Proteſtant Religion; in all which, ſome inferior Magiſtrates are juſtly complained of, as very defective, and that the ſaid Addreſs be preſented by ſuch, as the General Aſſembly ſhall appoint.

The General Aſſembly approves of theſe Overtures, and ſeriouſly recommends them to the ſeveral Presbyteries.

XVII.

Overtures for planting the Highlands. Eadem Seſſione.

1. THAT Miniſters and Probationers, who have the *Iriſh* Language, be ſent to the *Highland* Pariſhes, and that none of them be ſettled in the *Low* Country, till the *Highland* Places be firſt provided.

2. That Miniſters and Ruling Elders, who have the *Iriſh* Language, be appointed to viſit theſe Parts.

3. That where in any *Highland* Congregation, many underſtand *Engliſh*, and there uſed once a Day to be a Sermon in *Engliſh*, Presbyteries be careful to ſupply them ſometimes, by preaching in *Engliſh*, and that they catechiſe them who underſtand not, by an Interpreter, when they cannot get one to preach to them in *Iriſh*: And that theſe, whether Miniſters or Probationers, who have ſomewhat of the *Iriſh* Language, but not a Facility to preach in it, be ſent to theſe Places, for the Ends foreſaid; That by Converſe, they may learn more of the Language, and Ability to inſtruct therein.

4. That *Engliſh* School-Maſters be erected, in all *Highland* Pariſhes, according to former Acts of Parliament and General Aſſemblies: And for this End, the General Aſſembly recommends to their Commiſſion, to addreſs the King and Parliament, to take ſuch Courſe, for this and other pious Uſes, in the more *Northern-Highland* Places, as is granted to thoſe of *Argyle*, and that as they ſhall think fit.

5. That it be recommended to Presbyteries and Univerſities, to have a ſpecial Regard in the Diſpoſal of their Burſaries, for educating ſuch as, it is hoped, may be uſeful to preach the Goſpel in the *Highlands*: And that the Commiſſion addreſs the Lords of the Treaſury, and recommend the ſame to the Town-Council of *Edinburgh*, and other Patrons, for this End.

The General Aſſembly approves of theſe Overtures above-written, and recommends and appoints conform thereto.

XVIII.

XVIII.

Overtures anent Proclamation of Banns. Eadem Seſſione.

THE General Aſſembly being informed that ſeveral Abuſes have crept in, in the Way and Manner of proclaming the Banns of Perſons to be married, do, for preventing of the ſame, Overture and Declare, That before any proclamations be made, the Names and Deſignations of the Perſons to be married, and their Parents, Tutors or Curators, if they any have, be given up to the Miniſter of the Bounds, in which any of them live and reſide, that thereby it may be known, if their Parents and Friends give Conſent thereto; And that the Miniſter, being ſatisfied herein, order the Proclamation to be made three ſeveral Sabbaths; which, when made, ſhall be immediately before Divine Worſhip begin in the Forenoon, and the Perſons to be proclamed, their Names and full Deſignations, ſuch as they are deſigned by, in Writs or Contracts of Marriage, be fully and audibly expreſt; And that where there are more Churches collegiate in the Place or Town, the Proclamations be made in all, and every one of the Churches within the City or Town, where they, or any of the Perſons to be married reſide; And this to be atteſted to the Miniſter that marries them; with Certification of the Cenſures of the Church againſt the Tranſgreſſors herein.

XIX.

Act appointing ſome Probationers to go North. Ead. Seſſ.

THE ſaid Day, the General Aſſembly taking to their Conſideration their former Act, anent ſending Probationers to the *North*, do nominate and appoint theſe Probationers after-named, to go to the Provinces and Presbyteries after-mentioned, *viz* Mr. *William Chryſtie*, Mr. *Adam Scot*, and Mr. *John Drummond* to the Presbyteries of *Perth*, *Auchterarder* and *Dunkeld*; Mr. *James Muriſon*, Mr. *Arthur Shepherd*, Mr. *George Weems*, and Mr. *Thomas Berril*, to the Province of *Angus and Merns*; Mr. *Thomas Mitchel*, Mr. *David Anderſon*, and Mr. *John Warden*, to the Province of *Aberdeen*; Mr. *Andrew Ker*, Mr. *James Woodſide*, and Mr. *James Currie*, to the Province of *Murray*; Mr. *John M'Beath*, to the Provinces of *Roſs*, *Sutherland*, and *Caithneſs*. And becauſe Mr. *Patrick Melvil*, and Mr. *Archibald Hamilton* were nominate for *Aberdeen*, Mr. *Thomas Fraſer* for *Roſs*, *Sutherland* and *Caithneſs*, and Mr. *James Short* for *Orkney*, and

that there were ſome Objections made by them againſt it: Therefore the General Aſſembly refers to their Commiſſion, to conſider the ſaids Objections; and if they ſhall ſee Cauſe, to exeem them, and to name ſome other Probationers in their Rooms, to go to the Provinces above-ſpecified, conform to the former Acts of this Aſſembly.

See the Commiſſion's Act hereanent, after the Index of the unprinted Acts.

XX.

THE next General Aſſembly of this National Church is to be held at *Edinburgh*, upon the Twentieth Day of *January*, One Thouſand Six Hundred and Ninety Nine Years.

The Aſſembly being cloſed, the Members were diſmiſſed with Prayer, ſinging of the 133 *Pſalm, and pronouncing of the Bleſſing.*

Collected and Extracted from the Records of the General Aſſembly, by

J. BANNATYNE, *Cls. Syn. National.*

A

TABLE

Of the printed ACTS of the General Aſſembly, 1698.

1. THE Recording of His Majeſty's Commiſſion to the Lord *Carmichael*, for repreſenting His Majeſty in this Aſſembly. *Page* 3.

2. His Majeſty's gracious Letter to the General Aſſembly. 5.

3. The

3. The General Assembly's Answer to His Majesty's most gracious Letter. 6.
4. The General Assembly's Address to the King. 8.
5. Act and Declaration for Vindication of the Church of *Scotland*, from the Calumny of *Thomas Gipps* Rector of *Bury*, in a Sermon preached by him. 9.
6. Act for punctual sending of Commissioners to the General Assemblies, and their Attendance during the sitting thereof. 10.
7. Act anent the Deficients in supplying the *North*. 11.
8. Act approving Overtures for planting of the *North*. 11.
9. Act anent the printed Overtures concerning the Discipline and Method of proceeding in Ecclesiastick Judicatories, offered to the last Assembly by a private Hand. 14.
10. Approbation of the Actings and Proceedings of the Commission appointed by the last General Assembly. 14.
11. Recommendation anent subscribing of Synod-Books. 15.
12. Commission to some Ministers and Elders, for planting vacant Churches in the *North*, and some other particular Affairs committed to them by this General Assembly. 15.
13. Instructions to the Commission appointed by this Assembly, for planting of vacant Churches in the *North*, &c. 18.
14. Act appointing some Ministers to go for the supply of the *North* until the next Assembly. 19.
15. Overtures against Prophaneness. 21.
16. Overtures against Popery. 23.
17. Overtures for planting the Highlands. 24.
18. Overtures anent Proclamation of Banns. 25.
19. Act appointing some Probationers to go *North*. 25.
20. Appointment of the next Diet of the General Assembly.

INDEX

Of the ACTS, *&c. of the General Assembly* 1698, *which are not here printed.*

ELection of Mr. *George Meldrum* Moderator, *Sess. Prim.*
Mr. *John Bannatyne* chosen Clerk to this Assembly, *ib.*
The Commissioners and Moderators Speeches, *ib.*
Committee to draw an Answer to His Majesty's gracious Letter to this Assembly; as also an Address to the King, *ib.*

INDEX.

Commitee for Overtures, *ib.*
Committee for ripening Bills, References and Appeals, *ib.*
Committee for reviſing the Regiſter of the Proceedings of the Commiſſion of the laſt General Aſſembly *ib.*
Committee for naming Miniſters to preach before the Commiſſioner, and ſupplying the Kirks of the Miniſters of *Edinburgh*, who are Members of this Aſſembly, *ib.*
Appointment of a Diet for publick Prayer, *ib.*
A Diet ſpent in Prayer *Seſſ.* 2.
Mr. *Thomas Paterſon* Miniſter, appointed to ſtay at *Aberdeen* for ſome Time, *Seſſ.* 4.
Committee for conſidering the State of the Church in the *North*, *ib.*
Committee for taking up a Liſt of the Names of Probationers and Students,
Recommendation to the Committee for Overtures to chuſe Subcommittees, to conſider of the Cauſes of the Growth of Profaneneſs, Popery, and other Errors, and the Remedies thereof, *ib.*
Committees appointed for reviſing Synod-Books, *ib.*
Act refuſing the Tranſportation of Mr. *John Flint* to *Edinburgh*, and continuing him Miniſter at *Laſwade*, *Seſſ.*5.
Act taking off a Sentence of the Commiſſion 1696, tranſporting Mr. *John Dalgleiſh* from *Roxburgh* to *Oldmachar*, and that in regard of his Infirmity of Body; and being now incapacitate for ſerving at *Oldmachar*, which the Brethren from the *North* were convinced of, and therefore this Aſſembly continues him Miniſter at *Roxburgh*, *ib.*
Committee for cenſuring Abſents, *Seſſ.* 6.
Letter from *Caithneſs* excuſing that Presbytery's Abſence, which was ſuſtained; and the other Things in that Letter referred to the Committee for Overtures, *ib.*
Act refuſing to tranſport Mr. *James Elphingſton* to *Airth*, and continuing him at *Straublain*, *ib.*
Mr. *Alexander Steadman* excuſed for not going hitherto to *Wiek*, and that in regard of the Affliction of his Family:
And further, the Conſideration of his Caſe referred to the Commiſſion, and a Letter thereanent appointed to be written to the Presbytery of *Caithneſs* *Seſſ.* 7.
Committee for conſidering the State of the *North-Highlands*, *ib.*
Committee for conſidering the Danger by *Popery*, and other Errors, *ib.*
Act refuſing to tranſport Mr. *John Paiſley* to *Foveran*, and continuing him Miniſter at *Lochennoch*, *ib.*
Act refuſing to tranſport Mr. *Alexander Dalgleiſh* to *Dumfermling*, and continuing him Mininſter at *Abercorn*, *Seſſ.*8.
Recommendation to Presbyteries to endeavour to get Magiſtrates choſen to excute the Laws againſt Profaneneſs, ac-

according to the Act of Parliament, and that in vacant Pariſhes, as well theſe that are planted, *ib.*
Recommendation to the Brethren of *Roſs* and *Sutherland*, to aſſiſt the Presbytery of *Caithneſs*, when required, *ib.*
Advice to the Presbytery of *Caithneſs*, concerning a groſs Scandal in their Bounds. *ib.*
Act tranſporting Mr. *John Ferguſon* Miniſter, from *Roberton* to *Aberbrothwick*, and refuſing him to *Montroſe*, *Seſſ.* 9.
Addreſs to the Lords of His Majeſty's Treaſury and Exchequers, anent the Eſcheats of Adulterers, *Seſſ.* 10.
Act tranſporting Mr. *Thomas Black* Miniſter, from *Stramiglo* and *Weems* (that claimed Intereſt in him) to *Perth*, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion, concerning *Elgin*'s Call to Mr. *John Curry* now Miniſter at *Oldhamſtocks*, *Seſſ.* 11.
Act tranſporting Mr. *Charles Gordon* Miniſter, from *Aſhkirk* to be Profeſſor of Theology in the King's College of *Aberdeen*, *ib.*
Mr. *Thomas Black* appointed to exerciſe his Minſtry at *Weems* until he be admitted Miniſter at *Perth*, *Seſſ.* 12.
Recommendation to the Commiſſion, to be aſſiſting in planting of *Airth*, *ib.*
Act approving the laſt Commiſſions erecting Presbyteries in *Caithneſs* and *Orkney*, with a Reference to the Commiſſion of this Aſſembly thereanent, *ib.*
Recommendation and Warning to Presbyteries againſt needleſs Delays in Proceſſes of Tranſportation of Miniſters, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion anent the Proclamation of Council againſt Prophaneneſs, &c. *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion, concerning Mr. *Jo. Hepburn*, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion, concerning Mr. *George Mair* Probationer, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion, anent Mr. *James Forman*, *ib.*
Act anent Manuſcripts, and recommending to ſome Brethren who have reviſed them, to give what Advice they ſhall think fit, anent printing of ſome Manuſcripts of Mr. *Samuel Rutherford*, Mr. *John Baird*, and Mr. *Matthew Crawfurd*, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion anent the Minutes of the General Meetings and Aſſembly 1690, whereunto Mr. *John Spalding* was Clerk, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion concerning his Majeſty's Gifts, for defraying the publick Charges of this Church, *ib.*
Letter from the Presbytery of *Orkney* excuſing their not ſending Commiſſioners to this Aſſembly, which was ſuſtained, *ib*
Recommendation to Presbyteries and Pariſhes that have not yet ſent in their Collections, for helping to build a Church in *Koningsberg* for thoſe of the reformed Religion there; to ſend in the ſame to *Edinburgh*, to *John Blair* Agent for the Kirk, as ſoon as may be, and a Recommendation to the Commiſſion to ſee this done, *ib.*

Reference to the Commiſſion, in Favours of *South-Leith*, *Seſſ.* 13.
Act in favours of *Couper* in *Angus*, *ib.*
Acts approving the provincial Synod-books of *Argile*, *Glaſgow* and *Air*, *Lothian* and *Tweddale*, *Merſe* and *Tivoit dale*, *ib.*
Acts appointing the Regiſters of the provincial Synods of *Perth* and *Fife*, to be tranſcribed, and theſe with the Synod-Book of *Galloway* to be brought to the next General Aſſembly, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion, anent the Synod-Book of *Drumfries*, and ſome Proceſſes therein-mentioned, and Remarks thereupon, *ib.*
Act annexing the Brethren of the Synod of *Angus* and *Mearns* to the Synod of *Aberdeen* for a Time, *ib.*
Reference of Mr. *William Ruſſel's* Petition to the Commiſſion, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion, anent ſending Probationers to *Weems*, *Dumfermling* and *Airth*, *Sſſ.* 15.
Reference to the Commiſſion anent Schiſm, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion, anent writing to Profeſſors of Divinity in *Utrecht*, and other Univerſities, in the united Provinces, *&c.* As alſo, to invite home ſuch Miniſters that are abroad, as this Church hath a Claim to, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion, to write to Mr. *Thomas Hog*, to obey the Sentence of the Presbytery of *Edinburgh*, tranſporting him from *Camphire* to *Clackmanan*, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion, anent the Emolumentary Writs of Miniſters and Churches. *ib.*
Recommendation, anent a *Centeſima* of Miniſters Stipends, for the Relief of Miniſters Relicts and Children in Diſtreſs, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion, for preparing an Overture, anent the reviſing of the Records of Church Judicatories *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion, anent erroneous Books, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion, anent an Overture for preventing unneceſſary Proceſſes of Tranſportations, and Length of Papers, and Diſcourſes thereanent, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion, to cenſure Abſents from the Aſſembly, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion, anent the Deſire of the *African* and *Indian* Company for Miniſters, *ib.*
Recommendation to Presbyteries, to ſend in to the Agent for the Kirk, a Collection that was made for the Relief of ſome Chriſtians, that were taken Captive by the Turks, and detained Priſoners in *Barbaria*, with a Reference to the Commiſſion thereanent, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion, anent Mr. *Thomas Frazer's* Petition, *ib.*
Reference to the Commiſſion, concerning the Tranſportation

tion of Mr. *William Inglis* Miniſter, from *Kirkpatrick-Durham*, to *Kilſpindy*, *ib.*

A Petition for Mr. *Theodore Umphray*, Mr. *Cornelius Baron* Mr. *Hugh Leigh*, Mr. *William Umphray*, Mr. *James Kay*, and Mr. *William Binning* Miniſters in *Zetland*, who ſerved under the late Prelacy, now craving to be received unto miniſterial Communion, and a Share of the Government of the Church, being read, and none of the Petitioners being preſent, and they not known to the Aſſembly; therefore their Petition was referred to the Commiſſion, *ib.*

Reference to the Commiſſion, in Favours of St. *Andrews* and *Linlithgow*, *ib.*

Reference to the Commiſſion, concerning the Petition of Mr. *Kenneth Mackenzie*, *ib.*

Reference to the Commiſſion, concerning the Petition of Mr. *Walter Menzies*, *ib.*

Reference to the Commiſſion, to give Advice to Presbyteries and Miniſters, upon Application againſt Witchcraft, Sorcery, and Charming, *&c.* *ib.*

Committee for reviſing the Minutes, and ordering the printing of the Acts of this Aſſembly, *ib.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Commiſſion appointed by the late General Aſſembly, having conſidered the Objections made by ſome Probationers, nominate to the General Aſſembly, againſt their going *North*; do, conform to the Power given them, nominate and appoint theſe Probationers after-named, to repair to the reſpective Provinces following; *viz* Maſters, *John Gib*, *Peter Darline* and *James Murray* to the Province of *Aberdeen*, *Thomas Frazer* to the Province of *Murray*; *John Thornborn* to the Provinces of *Roſs*, *Sutherland* and *Caithneſs*; and this, beſides two Probationers yet to be named for *Orkney*, and theſe already appointed for the *North*, by the 19 Act of the ſaid Aſſembly.

At *Edinburgh*, 2d *February* 1698.

The Commiſſioners appointed by the late General Aſſembly, taking to their Conſideration what is committed to them by the 15th Act of the laſt Aſſembly, have agreed to tranſ-

mit theſe Overtures under-written to the ſeveral Presbyte. ries, conform to the ſaid Act, the Tenor of which Over. tures follows.

OVERTURES

Concerning the Method and Form of the Procedure of the Judicatories of the Church, againſt ſcandalous Perſons.

WIth Reſpect to Scandals, whoſe Groſneſs make it neceſſary to bring the Perſons guilty oftner than once before the Congregation.

1. It is overtured, That after they are convict before the Seſſion, that it be judicially declared to them, that they have rendred themſelves uncapable of Communion with the People of God in the Supper of the Lord, and that they ought not be allowed to be Sponſors themſelves in the Baptiſm of their Children, till the Scandal be removed; and that they be appointed to appear in publick, to be rebuked for their Sin, whether they appear penitent, or not; conform to the Inſtitution, 1 *Tim.* v. 20.

2. After a publick Rebuke, the Miniſter and Elders be at further Pains, in inſtructing the Minds of the ſcandalous Perſons, if ignorant; in endavouring to convince their Conſcience, and to bring them to a due Senſe of their Sin, and to an Engagement, and ſerious Reſolution againſt all known Sin, and to the Performance of all known Duty.

3. That the Seſſion, upon Satisfaction with their Knowledge and Senſe of their Sin, do admit them to the publick Profeſſion of their Repentance, in order to Abſolution.

4. If after taking Pains on them for ſome competent Time for their Inſtruction and Conviction, they ſtill remain groſly Ignorant, inſenſible and unreformed, the Sentence of leſſer Excommunication be publickly pronounced againſt them; from which they are not to be relaxed, nor admitted to make publick Profeſſion of their Repentance in order thereto, till the Seſſion be ſatisfied with their Knowledge, Seriouſneſs, and Reformation.

FINIS.